Box 76

THE PATH OF SERVICE IN THE VEDAS - BY A. MAHADEVA SHASTRI

THEOSOPHICAL PUBLISHING HOUSE, ADYAR, MADRAS, INDIA

1913

IN THE SAME SERIES

SOME FORGOTTEN TRUTHS OF HINDUISM

By J. Shrinivasa Rao

THE BASIC TRUTHS OF VEDIC RELIGION

By A. Mahadeva Shastri

THE RELATION OF GURU AND SHISHYA AND PRAPATTI—AT-ONE-MENT

By V. K. Deshikacharri

Ans. 4 or 4d. or 8c.

Postage : India $\frac{1}{2}$ Anna ; Foreign 1d. or 2c.

THE PATH OF SERVICE IN THE VEḌAS[1]

My study of the Veḍic Law of Marriage has led me on to the study of the Veḍic Law of Sacrifice known as Soma-yāga, which has a very significant bearing on the Veḍic ideal of marriage and married life. Soma-yāga originally meant service to the Divine Lord, a life of self-sacrifice and universal love in imitation of the Divine Lord, and in harmony with the Law of Evolution which indicates the will of the Divine Lord. But the Soma-yāga which we now find described in the Veḍa is a vast body of rituals worked out in such elaborate detail that the basic Law of Service, Self-sacrifice and Universal Love is well-nigh lost sight of. By the additions, alterations and varied adaptations effected from time to time, from different points of view, and for different purposes not always consistent with the basic Law of Sacrifice and Love, what might originally have been a simple, significant and effective ritual of Soma-yāga has become a heavy mass of cumbersome and almost meaningless ritual, a vast system composed of a number of semi-independent magic rites and ceremonies involving animal sacrifice and liquor-drinking. As a result of all this, we have to dig very deep into the system of the Veḍic sacrificial ritual in order to get at the trace of the Path of Service which lies submerged at the base beneath the vast superstructure that has risen above. It would have remained invisible and unrecognised, were it not that the Theosophical teaching, which has shed so much light on the Veḍic Religion, on the world-evolution

[1] A paper read at the T. S. Order of Service Meeting held on 28th December 1912, at the time of the T. S. Convention.

of the Purāṇas, and on the Occultism of the Yoga-shāstras, has stimulated us to investigate and trace the Path of Service which lies hidden beneath the ritual, symbolism and imagery of the Veḍas, Smṛtis, Purāṇas and Iṭihāsas. I now propose to sketch this Veḍic Path of Service in its bare outline.

The Brāhmaṇa's Triple Debt

The Veḍas make but an incidental reference to the Path of Service, when treating of animal sacrifice in connection with the Soma-yāga. By way of extolling the severance of flesh-slices from the heart, the tongue and the chest of the slaughtered animal, which are to be offered to Ḍevas through the sacred fire, it is said as follows:

> A Brāhmaṇa, on becoming such, becomes indebted in three ways: by spiritual devotion (*brāhmachārya*) to Ṛshis, by sacrifice (*Yajña*) to Ḍevas, by progeny (*prajā*) to Piṭṛs. Free from debt is he who has children, who sacrifices, and who leads a life of spiritual devotion. One verily cuts away this (indebtedness) by chopping off (the slices of flesh); wherefore the offerings of flesh-slices are called *chops* (*Ṭaiṭṭīrīya-Samhiṭā*, VI, iii, 10.)

Ignoring for the present the reference to animal sacrifice, we may understand the rest of the passage to mean that the Brāhmaṇa owes his status, as such, to the Piṭṛs, Ṛshis, and Ḍevas, and is therefore indebted to them, and that he discharges this triple debt by bringing forth progeny, by leading a spiritual life, and by engaging in sacrifice.

Let us see how a Brāhmaṇa, as such, incurs the triple debt. We are given to understand that three factors go to make a Brāhmaṇa:

> For the twice-born, according to the teaching of the Shruṭi, the first birth is from the mother, the second when the loins are girded with the munjā grass, the third when the consecration for sacrifice takes place. (*Manusmṛti*, ii, 169.)

The three factors which thus, according to Shruṭi, go to make a Brāhmaṇa may be stated as follows:

1. Good parentage and sound training (in childhood).
2. Spiritual instruction and training in spiritual life (in youth).
3. Devotion to the Divine Lord and to the Divine Hierarchy (in later life).

These three factors respectively represent the contribution of the three Divine Agencies at work in the furtherance of human evolution, and therefore constitute the Brāhmaṇa's triple debt to the Hierarchy.

His Debt to Piṭṛs

The Brāhmaṇa owes his good parentage to Piṭṛs, the creative orders in the Divine Hierarchy headed by the mighty Beings called Prajāpaṭis, such as Marīchi, Aṭri, etc. It is their function to see that humanity is supplied with suitable bodies, wherein the advanced souls may incarnate and work out their spiritual progress. Piṭṛs generally effect their purpose through human parents; but when, owing to the periodical degeneracy of a people, no worthy human parents are available to give birth to bodies of the required standard of excellence, they themselves incarnate among men for the purpose. Thus every Brāhmaṇa is indebted to Piṭṛs for the fine human organism which he has obtained through his parents, and for the early training which those parents have given him in his childhood.

His Debt to Ṛṣhis

To Ṛṣhis is the Brāhmaṇa indebted for the instruction in spiritual truths and for the training in spiritual life which he received from the teacher in youth. Ṛṣhis are the appointed guardians of the spiritual interests of humanity. Besides spreading broadcast the great spiritual truth through the great religions and their scriptures, they rouse

and stimulate the spiritual nature of man directly from the higher planes. He feels, thus, a hankering for spiritual life. He then approaches a teacher for instruction, resides with him for some years, leading a life of spiritual devotion under the eye of the teacher, and receives from him instructions for further progress. As the formulæ (manṭras) of the Upanāyana (ceremony of Initiation) tell us, the pupil is first taught the great truth that he is one with the Divine Lord of the Universe, nay, the Divine Lord Himself; that, leading a spiritual life, he should so control the body and the mind as to make them subservient to the behests of the Spirit within; that he should look up for all spiritual instruction to the Divine Lord Himself as embodied in the teacher; that he should render to the teacher such service as he would render to the Divine Lord; the teacher all the while professing to act only under the inspiration of the Divine Lord and the Hierarchy. Thus living in perfect trust in his Divine Self, and in the teacher as the embodiment of the Divine Lord and the Divine Hierarchy, the student learns all that is necessary for his further progress in this life. Thereby he becomes indebted to Ṛṣhis.

His Debt to Ḍevas

The Brāhmaṇa is indebted to Ḍevas for the high level of development to which his mind and senses have attained. This development is the handiwork of Ḍevas, who provide proper environment calculated to bring out the latent powers of the mind and the senses. In the long course of evolution which lies behind him, the mind and the senses have attained the power of comprehending the external and internal worlds; and at a further stage they can be completely withdrawn at will from the world of forms and fixed upon the Divine Life behind the forms and on the Divine Self within. When a man is able to do this, he becomes a channel for a continuous inflow

of Divine Life. Then he is fit to take part in the work of the Divine Hierarchy, and his further progress lies in this co-operation. Now is the time for Yāga-ḍīkṣhā, for the consecration of the whole life to the Divine Service; and, by taking this step, he attains the full status of a Brāhmaṇa.

A True Brāhmaṇa

Thus a Brāhmaṇa is one whose physical body is pure and healthy; whose spiritual aspiration has been fully awakened; who, having been taught the Divinity of his true Self, seeks to realise his unity with Brahman, the Divine Lord; who has learned to control the body and the mind and the senses by the Spirit within; who has been given instructions for his further spiritual progress; who can invoke the Divine Intelligences and act as a channel for their Divine Life; who has consecrated his whole life by devoting all his powers to the service of the Divine Lord and the Hierarchy.

The True Brāhmaṇic Status is Independent of Caste and Sex

We thus see that a man becomes a Brāhmaṇa by Yāga-ḍīkṣhā, by the consecration of his life to the service of the Divine Lord, by doing all work for His glory. Good parentage and early training in spiritual life are of value only as leading to this step, as impelling a man to lead a life of self-sacrifice and universal love. Hence the formula of declaration in the Ḍīkṣhā ceremony: "He has consecrated his life to the Divine Service, and has become a Brāhmaṇa." Commenting on this declaration, the Shruṭi says :

> Uncertain, as it were, is his origin heretofore; for the Rākṣhasas, they say, pursue women, and so the Rākṣhasas implant their seed therein. But, he, forsooth, is truly born who

is born of the Brahman, of the sacrifice ; wherefore let him address even a Kṣhaṭriya or Vaishya as Brāhmaṇa, since he who is born of sacrifice is born of Brahman (and hence is a Brāhmāṇa). (*Shaṭapaṭha-Brāhmaṇa*, III, ii, 1-40.)

This gives us to understand that the spiritual status as a Brāhmaṇa is quite independent of the distinctions (such as Brāhmaṇas, Kṣhaṭriyas, Vaishyas, etc.,) which depend on the social or civil functions that by heredity they are best fitted to discharge. It is the consecration of one's whole life to the Divine Service that makes one a true Brāhmaṇa, whatever one's birth, profession or civil function may be, and whatever may be one's sex.

The Brāhmaṇa is Bound to Discharge the Three Debts

We have seen how in the attainment of the full status of a Brāhmaṇa, a man becomes indebted to Piṭṛs, Ṛṣhis and Ḍevas. It becomes, then, a moral necessity for him to pay back to the Hierarchy what he has received from it. And as the sole concern of the Hierarchy is the evolution of humanity, the Brāhmaṇa can pay off the debt due to it by co-operating in its work, by doing a part of the work which it does for humanity, so that its work may be lightened, and human evolution may progress a little more rapidly.

In thus co-operating with the Hierarchy, the Brāhmaṇa makes real, onward, progress towards the main goal of his aspiration. In fact, his further progress runs along the line of co-operation with the Hierarchy. To those who are at the threshold of the Path of Service, or who have only just begun to tread it, this co-operation presents itself as the legal discharge of a debt incurred, or as a moral necessity. But, as a matter of fact, it is the path which alone can take the Brāhmaṇa to the goal he seeks, to the realisation of his oneness with the Divine Lord. For, by co-operating with the Hierarchy, he makes himself a channel through which the Divine Life will flow as It

flows through the Hierarchy. It is through the Hierarchy that the Divine Lord carries on the world-evolution; and therefore whatever the Brāhmaṇa does by way of co-operation in the work of the Hierarchy constitutes service to the Divine Lord. As he progresses in this work of co-operation with the Hierarchy, he forms a more and more efficient medium for the flow of the Divine Life needed for the evolutionary progress of humanity and the whole sentient existence. Then there comes a stage when work in the service of the Lord will constitute the very nature of his being, the joy of his life. As he approaches perfection in this line of Service, he realises more and more the true Divinity of the Self in him, as manifesting the Divine Powers needed for the evolution of the world. Thus the path of co-operation with the Hierarchy leads the Brāhmaṇa to the level of Brahman, Prajāpaṭi, the Lord of Creation—which is the goal of his aspiration.

The Brāhmaṇa's Life of Service

From this point of view, we are able to understand the full significance of the words of the Shruṭi quoted above: "Free from debt is he who has children, who sacrifices, and who leads a life of spiritual devotion." Rearing a family in a worthy fashion, living a life of self-sacrifice and service, and leading a life of spiritual devotion, the Brāhmaṇa discharges his debt to the Hierarchy. Then he will be free to leave the human world and to pass on to the higher worlds.

Let us study a little more closely the life of the Brāhmaṇa here mapped out. For a Brāhmaṇa, man or woman, seeking fellowship with the Divine Lord and trying to realise the divinity of the true Self in man, the first and foremost duty is to seek a worthy partner in life. The first steps on the path of liberation and immortality would seem to lie in married life. The parties to the marriage should both be Brāhmaṇas, devotees of Brahman,

cherishing the same aspiration, striving to grow into the likeness of Brahman, seeking to attain unity with the Divine Lord of the Universe, and devoted to the service of the Divine Lord and the Divine Hierarchy. They should both have attained some spiritual development, some degree of spiritual culture; having spent their youth under a spiritual Guru, and learned, under his instruction and guidance, to control the body, the senses and the mind; having learned from him the basic spiritual truths and the main laws of spiritual evolution. The Vedic Law further lays down that the man and the woman to be united in marriage should be of different *gotras*, that is to say, of different religious temperaments, and should have been brought up on two different lines of spiritual culture; so that their conjoint life may prove advantageous to both, the one contributing to the other what that other lacks. Marriage means—as the chief marriage formula indicates—the solemn vow of a man and a woman to live together a life of spiritual devotion in mutual love and harmony, thinking, proposing, and acting in unison, joining together in all the concerns and enjoyments of life. It is the fulfilment of this vow that constitutes married life. It is no wonder that such a pair (we are told) should give birth to valiant Heroes, noble Sages, and God-men. This verily is the way to discharge the debt to Pitṛs. Such a progeny, born of and reared by such parents, really forms a noble contribution to the work of the Creative Order of the Divine Hierarchy.

Spiritual Devotion in Married Life

The married life is also a life of spiritual devotion (brahmachārya). In fact we are told that married life, according to the Vedic ideal, alone constitutes the brahmachārya (*spiritual life*) which leads to liberation. According to the *Vedic Law*, the married couple should continue the life of spiritual devotion, a life of Spirit, free from material lust and sensuality. Sexual continence forms its special

feature. Even the act of creation in which they engage forms a conscious direction of the divine energy for a divine purpose, for the furtherance of the spiritual evolution of humanity as a whole. The life of spiritual control over the material organism, begun in early youth under the guidance of the teacher, is thus to be carried on in the period of manhood. While themselves leading a life of Spirit in this fashion, they bring up their children for the same kind of life, and also train such other youths as offer themselves for spiritual training and instruction and are found worthy of it. In this way the Brāhmaṇas discharge the debt to Ṛṣhis.

Sacrifice and Service in Married Life

Further the married life is one of continual sacrifice, a life of strenuous activity dedicated to the service of the Divine Lord and the Hierarchy of Ḍevas. The sole concern of this life is the furtherance of evolution in co-operation with the Divine Hierarchy. In his single-minded devotion to the service of the Divine Lord, the Brāhmaṇa becomes a channel of the Divine Life, directing it for the benefit of humanity and the whole sentient existence. In this way he realises his oneness with the Divine Lord, who, as Viṣhṇu, preserves and maintains the universe in its orderly evolution. This is the true meaning of Soma-yāga, the realisation of Soma (or Viṣhṇu) as known to the true Brāhmaṇas, as the One in whom the whole universe abides, whose Glory is seen in all that is glorious, as the Veḍic Sage has sung in the famous nuptial hymn:

> By Soma are the Āḍityas strong, by Soma mighty is the Earth; and within these stars too hath Soma his place. One thinks he hath drunk Soma when they have brayed the plant; but of Soma whom Brāhmaṇas know, no one ever tastes.

By acting as a channel for the flow of the Divine Life needed for the world's evolution, the Brāhmaṇa co-operates with Ḍevas. This is the Sacrifice (Yajña) which

secures freedom from the debt of Ḍevas, as it lightens and advances their work. Whether the Brāhmaṇa works for the benefit of the world as a philosopher, as a scientist, or as a philanthropist, he is discharging the debt to Ḍevas. While thus co-operating directly with the Divine Hierarchy in the best interests of humanity, the Brāhmaṇa serves it indirectly by helping the younger aspirants to do the same by instruction, advice and co-operation.

The Goal of the Path of Service

Such is the Path of Service marked out for the Brāhmaṇa who strives for immortality, in pursuance of the Veḍic command: "Let every mortal being seek fellowship with the Divine Lord." No man can escape death till he has learnt to be completely at one with the Divine Lord and realised the divinity of his true Self. For this at-one-ement and realisation, he has to unfold the triple Divine Nature of the Self within, by co-operating with the three Agencies of the Divine Hierarchy, who represent the Shiva, Viṣhṇu and Brahmā aspects of the Supreme Lord of the Universe. Thus the Veḍic Path of three-fold Service secures an all round spiritual development of man. Not till perfection in this line of Service is attained, is a man free from the bonds of earthly life. His attempts, till then, to rise above humanity will all be vain. This truth is shadowed forth in the *Manusmṛti:*

> After paying the three debts may he fix his mind on deliverance. He who without paying them seeks deliverance goes downward. (*Manusmṛti*, vi, 35.)

When the discharge of the triple debt is complete, then only a man may think of finally leaving this world; till then he must be engaged in one or all of the three lines of Service.

The Veḍic Householder is the True Samnyāsin

The Veḍic Path of Service is, as we have seen, a life of intense and strenuous activity divested of all

selfish interest. Lord Shrī Kṛshṇa refers to this when he says:

> Whoso, not seeking the fruit of action, performs the action which ought to be done, he is a Samnyāsin and a Yogin, not he who is without fire and without action (*Bhagavaḍ-Gīṭā*, vi, 1).

Here, the active service of true renunciation and devotion is contrasted with the life of the so-called Samnyāsin who has merely renounced the external sacred fires and the rituals therewith connected. He who treads the Veḍic Path of disinterested service to the Divine Lord is, in the opinion of the Lord Shrī Kṛshṇa, a true Samnyāsin and Yogin. It is this life of service, this life of beneficent unselfish activity and spiritual devotion which the Veḍic Law expects every householder to lead; so that the householder of the Veḍic Law is, according to the Lord Shrī Kṛshṇa, a true Samnyāsin and Yogin. Such householders work their way up towards liberation by discharging the triple debt; and in fact, a complete discharge of the obligations due to the Hierarchy is possible only to the householders, men and women, leading a married life of intense unselfish activity in ardent spiritual devotion on the lines of the Veḍic Law. Their life is different from that of the civic householders, whose religious life consists of rituals involving the maintenance of the external sacred fires. The fire which the Veḍic householder maintains is the Divine Fire within, shining in all the splendour and beauty of the mind and the heart intent on service of the Divine Lord and His Hierarchy. This fire and this activity never cease in the life of the Veḍic householder, and they constitute the true Samnyāsa and Yoga which are really one, as the Lord says:

> What they call Samnyāsa, that do thou, O Pāṇḍava, know as Yoga. Verily, no one who has not renounced personal interests can become a Yogin. (*Bhagavaḍ Gīṭā*, vi, 2.)

The ritualistic activity of the householder ordained in the Institutes such as *Manusmṛṭi*, is only a shadow of the Veḍic Path of Service, as all rituals and symbols are mere

shadows and signs of real facts. The rituals known as *Brahmayajña, Ḍevayajña,* and *Piṭṛyajña* consist in reciting manṭras, and pouring water and oblations into the sacred fire. This is but a poor substitute for the actual world-wide Service in co-operation with the Divine Hierarchy. The life of the ordinary Samnyāsin is likewise one of rituals, though not connected with external fires, and is solely directed to the furtherance of personal culture, without any conscious concern for the world's progress. Of small account, by the side of the Veḍic householder's life, indeed, is the spiritual life of such a Samnyāsin, or of the householder who thinks he has discharged the debt due to the Hierarchy when he has offered some water or butter, or, worse still, some slices of flesh cut from an animal slaughtered for the purpose.

The Veḍic Path of Service is devoid of Ritual

Such rituals are not for the men and the women who tread the Veḍic Path of Service, who live a life of unselfish world-wide activity in the Service of the Divine Hierarchy. This can be made out from the ritualistic section of the Veḍa itself. I have already spoken of Ḍīkṣhā, the process of consecration which makes one a Brāhmaṇa. Even this process now survives only in the form of a ritual elaborately worked out. Primarily, as indicated by the manṭras connected with the ritual, Ḍīkṣhā, means cutting oneself off from all personal concerns and devoting all thought, speech and action solely to the contemplation of the Divine Lord and to His Service. The devotee (Ḍīkṣhiṭa) maintains this attitude throughout the waking life, and when he retires for sleep at night, praying to the Divine Fire—to the Divine Lord and Self shining forth in his devout mind—to keep watch that, in his sound sleep, the evil powers may not attack him, and that he may awake in time. He gets up again at midnight and adores the Divine Fire, for having so far kept his devotion inviolate. Again, when he awakens in

the last watch of the night, he prays to the Divine Lord that his mind may never wander away from the Lord, and that he may grow strong in the strength of the Lord and continue the life of self-sacrifice and service till he safely reaches the goal of the Path. Then he seeks the protection of the mighty Ḍevas whose habitat and sphere of work is manas. In this connection the Brahmavāḍins (Theologians) ask a pertinent question: Should the devotee (Ḍīkṣhiṭa) observe, or should he not observe, the daily morning and evening ritual of making offerings of milk and butter in the sacred fire? The answer is given in the negative. In the current practice, too, the Ḍīkṣhiṭa is released, during the period of Ḍīkṣhā, from the observance of morning and evening Agnihoṭra ritual, and of the morning and evening Sanḍhyāvanḍana prayers, both of which are the ritualistic substitutes for the meditation on the Divine Self within, which is practised by the true Ḍīkṣhiṭa just before and after the nightly sleep. The reason assigned for the omission of the morning and evening rituals is very significant. The Veḍa explains as follows: the Ḍīkṣhiṭa having offered *himself* as a sacrifice to the Divine Lord, his body would constitute the substance to be offered in the sacred fire. That shall not be, by means of his death. On the contrary, it is said that the sanctified milk which the Ḍīkṣhiṭa has to drink at the close of his prayer to God and Ḍevas goes to feed the Ḍevas, by way of feeding the vital organs through which the Ḍevas act, and thereby constitutes the Agnihoṭra. This is the explanation given from the ritualistic point of view. But the real explanation which it suggests is this: Ḍīkṣhiṭa is one who has sacrificed his personal interests in life and has devoted his whole life to the service of the Divine Lord and the Hierarchy. He has, therefore, risen above all rituals in which, not the man himself and his whole life, but something belonging to him is offered to God and Ḍevas symbolically. Thus, rituals are not meant for the men and the women who, seeking to realise in consciousness

their Divine potentialities, dedicate themselves to the Divine Lord and the Hierarchy for active service in the interests of humanity as a whole and in the world-progress.

The Modern Hindu Ritualistic Life is Unreal

This ideal of active service in co-operation with the Divine Hierarchy, unconnected with all ritual, has long been forgotten by the Hinḍūs who profess to follow the Veḍic Law. The Hinḍūs, as a whole, have all along remained a pious people; but their piety has taken a ceremonial turn. Their religious life is one round of rituals and ceremonies, which are often very perfunctorily observed, and have become quite unreal and almost useless. But their observance is insisted on in all orders of holy life, including the Samnyāsins. Complete freedom from rituals in spiritual life is allowed by the the Institutes only to the Samnyāsin of the highest or Paramahamsa order, who lives almost by and for himself, but with some definite end in view. Very few, however, avail themselves of this freedom, inasmuch as the public now-a-days looks askance at those who resort to it. Indeed, too many of these do not lead the life which ought to go with it, namely, the life of a real student of Brahmaviḍyā.

The Place of Ritual in Spiritual Life

It must not, however, be understood that rituals are of no use at all. They have their place and use in the spiritual life of a man. When closely examined, rituals will be found to consist of elements which serve different purposes and are of different values. Some are symbolic processes, placing the body and the mind in particular attitudes which open the organism for the inflow of Divine Grace. Others constitute exercises and processes which secure the health and purity of the mind and the body. Others, again, partake of the nature of ceremonial Magic,

involving incantations and manipulations of substances, setting free forces which act beneficially upon the organism and its environment. As to the use of these rituals in religious life, the Hindū religious teachers estimate it variously. Some inculcate a life-long observance, while others would dispense with them altogether. The Veḍāntic teachers, inclined to neither extreme, seem to take a reasonable view of the place of the ritual in the spiritual life of man. According to Shrī Shaṅkarāchārya, when a man goes through the daily round of rituals enjoined in the Shruṭi and the Smṛṭi, with no longing for the immediate fruits of his actions, seeking only the knowledge of Brahman which will lead to liberation, his organism becomes healthy and refined, his mind becomes pure; and in due course, he will get an intuitive glimpse into the true nature of the Self and be able to discriminate the real and the unreal. There ends the purpose of the ritual. For further development he may give up the ritual entirely.

Samnyāsa without Ritual

He then formally renounces all ritual and becomes a Samnyāsin of the Paramahamsa order. Even this renouncement of rituals is done with some ceremony, simply with a view to impress the people with the holiness of his future vocation. His is not an idle life. He is freed from rituals merely because he will have so much to do by way of study and practice of higher Yoga. He is not without fire either. Though he has not to maintain the external fires, he has to generate and tend the sacred Fire within, as the Smṛṭi says:

> Having established the sacred fires in himself, the Brāhmaṇa should go forth from the house. (*Manu*, vi, 38.)

By Ḍhyāna and Ḍhāraṇa, by dwelling constantly on the Divine Self within, in devotion and love, he develops the Divine Fire in himself. With this Fire burning within, he should perfect his control over the mind and the

senses and the body. He should cultivate absolute truthfulness, practise sexual continence, abstain from all cruelty, be kind to all and learn to love the whole sentient existence. He should study Scriptures, reflect and meditate upon their teaching till the intellect is firmly convinced of the truth that the Self in man is one with the Divine Lord of the Universe. This involves the practice of Yoga in its higher stages, wherein the mind, concentrated upon the Supreme Brahman, reaches an intuitive perception of the same truth. As a student of Brahmavidyā the Paramahamsa has a definite aim, and follows an intelligible method to achieve his purpose. He is therefore above all the rules of Varṇa and Āshrama which enjoin rituals and ceremonies; for these do not help him in the achievement of the end in view, namely, the perfecting of Self-knowledge.

The Path of Liberation

When he has attained this true knowledge of the Self, then for a practical realisation of the Divine Self in him, he has yet to tread the Path of Service, to lead a life of self-sacrifice and service in co-operation with the Divine Hierarchy. Perfection in this leads to liberation from the trammels of the earth. When oneness with the Divine Lord has been realised in the sphere of human evolution, he is free to pass on to the higher regions and other universes, there also to realise his oneness with the Divine Lord. Thus progressing on and on, he will at last realise his oneness, amounting almost to identity, with the Supreme Lord of the whole Universe.

The Vasantā Press, Adyar, Madras

BOOKS ON HINDUISM

True Hinduism. By Rama Prasad. Rs. 1-4 or 1s. 6d. or 40c.

Transformed Hinduism.
By E. P. B. 2 Vols. Rs. 3-12 or 5s. or $1.15.

Hindu Feasts, Fasts and Ceremonies.
By S. M. N. Shastri. Rs. 1-8 or 2s. or 50c.

Hindu Metaphysics. By M. N. Shastri. Rs. 2 or 2s. 6d. or 65c.

Self Culture, The Yoga of Patanjali.
By Rama Prasad. Rs. 1-8 or 2s. or 50c.

Hindu Philosophy in a Nutshell.
By E. B. Warman. Rs. 1-4 or 1s. 9d. or 45c.

Hindu Religions. By H. H. Wilson. Rs. 2-8 or 3s. 6d. or 80c.

Hindu Social Progress.
By N. Subba Rao. Rs. 2 or 2s. 6d. or 65c.

Hinduism; Ancient and Modern.
By Lala Baij Nath. Rs. 3 or 4s. or $1.

Hindu Realism.
By J. C. Chatterjee, M.A. Rs. 3 or 4s. or $1.

Peoples and Problems of India.
By Sir T. W. Holderness. Re. 1 or 1s. 6d. or 40c.

Brahma-Knowledge.
By L. D. Barnett, M.A., Litt. D. Re. 1 or 1s. 6d. or 40c.

Religion and Philosophy of India.
By P. Deussen, Ph. D. Rs. 7-14 or 10s. 6d. or $2.50.

Religion of Brahman.
By S. Tattvabhushan. Ans. 8 or 8d. or 16c.

The Light of the School of Ramanuja. Rs. 2 or 2s. 6d. or 65c.

Daily Practice of the Hindus.
By Sri Chandra Vasu. Rs. 1-4 or 1s. 9d. or 45c.

Aggressive Hinduism.
By Sister Nivedita. Ans. 4 or 4d. or 8c.

The Vedic Law of Marriage.
By A. Mahadeva Shastri. Ans. 8 or 8d. or 16c.

Vedic Religion and Caste.
By A. Mahadeva Shastri. Ans. 8 or 8d. or 16c.

Theosophical Publishing House
ADYAR, MADRAS, INDIA

Hinduism in the Light of Theosophy

By ANNIE BESANT

Hindu Ideals	Boards Rs. 1-6 or 2s. or 50c. Cloth Rs. 1-14 or 2s. 6d. or 65c.
In Defence of Hinduism	Ans. 8 or 6d. or 16c.
Ancient Ideals in Modern Life	Boards Re. 1 or 1s. 6d. or 40c. Cloth Rs. 1-8 or 2s. or 50c.
Avataras	Boards Re. 1 or 1s. 6d. or 40c. Cloth Rs. 1-8 or 2s. or 50c.
Hints on the Study of the Bhagavad Gita	Boards Re. 1 or 1s. 6d. or 40c. Cloth Rs. 1-4 or 1s. 8d. or 45c.
An Introduction to Yoga	Boards Re. 1 or 1s. 6d. or 40c.
Four Great Religions	Boards Ans. 15 or 1s. 3d. or 30c. Cloth Rs. 1-8 or 2s. or 50c.
Questions on Hinduism, with Answers	Boards Rs. 1-4 or 1s. 9d. or 50c. Cloth 1-8 or 2s. or 50c.
Shri Rama Chandra, the Ideal King	Boards Rs. 1-6 or 2s. or 50c. Cloth Rs. 1-14 or 2s. 6d. or 65c.
The Story of the Great War	Boards Rs. 1-6 or 2s. or 50c. Cloth Rs. 1-14 or 2s. 6d. or 65c.
The Wisdom of the Upanishads	Boards Ans. 14 or 1s. 2d. or 30c. Cloth Rs. 1-4 or 1s. 8d. or 45c.
Universal Textbook of Religion and Morals II. Parts	Paper Ans. 12 or 1s. or 25c. Cloth Re. 1. or 1s. 6d. or 40c.
The Religious Problem in India	Boards Re. 1 or 1s. 6d. or 40c. Cloth Rs. 1-4 or 1s. 8d. or 45c.

By BABU BHAGAVAN DAS, M.A.

The Science of Social Organisation or The Laws of Manu, PP. 358	Boards Rs. 1-8 or 2s. or 50c. Cloth Rs. 2-8 or 3s. 6d. or $1.
The Science of the Sacred Word or Pranava Vada, 3 Vols.	Cloth Rs. 4-8 or 6s. or $1.50.

Theosophical Publishing House

ADYAR, MADRAS, INDIA